

the world should be what it is. But that is
 nothing new
 We should know life by this time. People
 whose faitt
 waited to be shattered by the War, had
 either read little
 history or had read it with little imagination.
 Indeed life
 may be all the intenser under the shadow
 of death:
 'sfachons gre au sort de nous avoir faict vivre
 en un siecle
 non mol, languissant, ny oysif. Those
 brave words
 might often recur to us today.

Not that, as some imagine, Montaigne's
 creed of
 conduct was purely passive. He was
 moderate and so
 abused by both parties: 'au Gibelin., i'estoy
 Guelphe; au
 Guelphe, Gibelin'. But, like Solon, he held
 that in an
 actual civil conflict the good citizen cannot
 refuse to take
 sides; that is 'ny beau ny honneste'. It is easy,
 but absurd,
 to mistake Montaigne for a *faineant*;
 forgetting that he
 thought the finest profession was a soldier's;
 forgetting,
 too, how contemporaries like Henri IV, de
 Thou, or
 Florimond de Roemond admired his
 practical competence
 and knowledge of affairs. But it is true,
 I think, to
 say that his courage and his disposition had a
 tendency to *
 be somewhat passive. He knew this himself:
 le danger
 n'estoit pas que ie feisse mal, mais que ie ne
 feisse rien'.
 But that would not have weakened a jot his
 belief that
 to replace voting by violence, argument by
 apostolic
 blows and knocks, is a relapse from
 civilisation to bar-

barism. If there remains one thing clearly
worth fighting
against in the modern world, it is surely this;
if there
remains one thing worth fighting for, it is
freedom of
thought and of speech, the rights of the
individual in-
telligence against the new and monstrous
chimera of the
state, Montaigne himself exists as a
perpetual witness
to the benefits of tolerance; for had France
not opened
her doors to the outcast Jews of Spain and
Portugal from